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AUTHOR Empey, Donald W.
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ABSTRACT

This document describes the Glendale Unified School District's (California) comprehensive drug, alcohol, and tobacco education program. The program is based on three components: (1) a sequential outcome-based curriculum that provides students with knowledge about substance abuse and peer-resistant skills; (2) a strong message that the possession, use, and sale of these substances will not be tolerated on the campus or at school-sponsored activities; and (3) community involvement to coordinate resources for prevention and rehabilitation. The following components are briefly described--planning, policy, curriculum for different grade levels, staff development, parent and community involvement, student assistance and intervention, positive alternatives, and evaluation. Student and teacher surveys and analyses of school discipline and police records indicate a decline in drug use, improved knowledge and use of communication and peer-resistant skills, a decline in school suspensions, and a decrease in juvenile felonies and misdemeanors. (Contains five curriculum references.) (LMI)

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ED 360 705

GLENDALE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
223 North Jackson Street
Glendale, CA 91206

# COMPREHENSIVE SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION PROGRAM

Presented to the Western Regional Center
for Drug-Free Schools and Communities Conference

February 3-5, 1993
Portland, Oregon

Donald W. Empey

EA 025 149

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**Glendale Unified School District**

**Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Education Program**

## I. Introduction

The Glendale Unified School District is located near the City of Los Angeles and serves 28,000 students. Over the past several years, the District has planned and implemented a comprehensive drug, alcohol, and tobacco education program. The program is based on three key elements. These major elements are:

A. A sequential curriculum that goes beyond informing young people about the dangers of substance abuse and provides them with the skills to resist becoming involved in drug use. These resistance skills can often be put to immediate use as adolescents face the problems of peer pressure.

B. A strong message from the school that the possession, use, and sale of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs will not be tolerated on the campus or at school-sponsored activities.

C. An involvement by the community working with the schools to coordinate and utilize resources for both prevention and rehabilitation programs. The schools also need to provide leadership in stimulating parent education programs. Many parents need and desire more information about substance abuse and parenting skills.

A brief description of the components of the Glendale Program are described in the pages that follow.

## II. Program Components

### A. Planning

The planning effort to incorporate the elements listed above began in the fall of 1986 when the Board of Education appointed a 65-member ad hoc advisory committee. The committee was charged with the responsibility to review substance abuse prevention programs and recommend ways of strengthening school and community efforts. Committee members included representatives from various youth agencies, parent organizations, city government, law enforcement, hospitals, high school students, teachers, counselors, school nurses, and school administrators.

After five months of study by six subcommittees, the ad hoc advisory group submitted its report and recommendations to the Glendale Board of Education. The recommendations called for a strong sequential curriculum, teacher staff development, parent education, a coalition of community agencies, expanded after-school programs for young people, and a strong "no to drugs" message from the schools.

Implementation of the District's Substance Abuse Prevention Program began in the fall of 1987. The program was enhanced in 1990 when funds from the Drug Free Schools and Communities (DFSC) Act and the California Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) Program became available. The District received $377,000 from these funding sources in 1992-93.

In February of 1992, the District, with the assistance of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, conducted an evaluation of program quality. In May of 1992, the District Advisory Committee was convened for a day-long meeting to review the results of the Program Quality Review and to consider modifications to the plan. The advisory committee made no recommendations for change, but requested that consideration be given to incorporating a drug education curriculum unit in grades 7 or 8.

B. Policy

The District maintains and enforces a firm policy prohibiting the possession, use, and sale of drugs on school campuses and at student activity events. The rules and penalties are spelled out in student handbooks and communicated to parents. A code of conduct for school athletics has been implemented which calls for the suspension from athletic teams for drug use.

The importance of adult role modeling is exemplified through a Board Policy prohibiting the sale and consumption of alcohol or other drugs at school-related events sponsored by adults when students are present. In addition, the Board has adopted a tobacco-free workplace policy which prohibits the use of tobacco products at all school facilities and in District vehicles.

C. Curriculum

The heart of the District's program for alcohol, drug, and tobacco education is a solid curriculum at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. After an extensive study of curriculum guides from other school

districts, as well as commercially prepared programs, the District Advisory Committee recommended, and the Board approved, the utilization of four published programs and one community-funded program. The committee recommended these programs based on program objectives, specific needs at each grade level, and coordination with programs already in existence in some Glendale schools. The committee chose not to write an entirely new drug education curriculum when such outstanding programs were already available. The following are descriptions of the five foundation programs and an indication as to the grade level in which each is used in Glendale schools:

1. Thomas Jefferson Character Education Program (required at Grades K-3, optional at Grades 4-6)

   This program, available through the Thomas Jefferson Research Center in Pasadena, California, is the cornerstone for the early development of character and personal responsibility skills. Based on a study of values shared by various cultures and major religions, the program stresses 15 common values, including honesty, courage, tolerance, kindness, and justice.

   During daily lessons of 15-20 minute duration, teachers use the Socratic approach with stories, questions, and discussions which allow students to examine important ethical concepts. Personal responsibility skills are acquired as children discuss possible outcomes of alternative behaviors for themselves and others.

2. Starting Early (Grades K-3)

   This alcohol awareness program, available through the American Automobile Association, consists of five 30-minute lessons per grade level. The premise of the program is that children will be better prepared to confront alcohol-related situations through participatory classroom activities which stimulate their thinking on the topic. Students gain knowledge about how alcohol influences the body and mind and the potentially dangerous consequences of alcohol misuse. A teacher's guide and instructional materials kit is available for each grade level. The kit includes reproduction masters, filmstrips, and accompanying tape cassettes, games, charts, and test booklet masters.

3. Here's Looking At You 2000 (Grades 4, 5, and 10)

This program, available through the Comprehensive Health Education Foundation of Seattle, contains a clear "no drug use" message. It is based on known risk factors, such as having drug-using friends, living in a family with chemically dependent members, and early first use of drugs. There are 19 lessons in grade four, 20 in grade five, and 31 in grade ten. The program teaches young people how to avoid trouble with others, self-control, the importance of family, coping skills, and self-esteem. A cornerstone of the program is the teaching of refusal skills. Students learn the steps to saying no to negative behavior while keeping friends.

The program makes use of cooperative learning strategies, and many lessons feature activities that students can do at home with their families. Instructional kits include videotapes, posters, books, cards, filmstrips, games, puzzles, hand puppets, reference materials, charts, and more. A comprehensive teacher guide is available at each grade level.

4. DARE (Grade 6)

The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program originated with the Los Angeles Unified School District and Los Angeles Police Department. Beginning in the fall of 1990, it replaced the "Here's Looking At You 2000" Program for sixth grade students in most schools throughout the District. One full-time police officer is assigned to present twelve weekly lessons to each participating class. The program carries a strong "no to drugs" message and emphasizes resistance to peer pressure and the building of self-esteem.

5. Skills for Adolescence (Grade 7)

Skills for Adolescence is a joint program of Lions' International and Quest International. The curriculum helps young adolescents develop the skills and self-confidence they need as they grow through the teen years. The curriculum addresses the primary causes of many problems of adolescence: low self-esteem, difficulty in coping with negative peer pressure, poor family communications, irresponsibility, a lack of goals, and poor decision-making skills.

In Glendale, Skills for Adolescence classes are taught as a required one-semester course for all seventh grade students. The curriculum units focus on building self-confidence through communications, self-discipline, improving peer relationships, family relationships, developing critical thinking skills for decision making, setting goals for healthy living, and developing one's potential.

The program includes activities to reinforce refusal skills, as well as information about tobacco and chemical substances, including cocaine and crack. Instructional materials for the program include a student workbook, a student textbook, and a comprehensive teacher's manual. The program includes a strong parent component, and a parent textbook is available.

D. Staff Development

The key to the successful implementation of the curriculum has been a comprehensive staff development program. Training sessions have been provided for all teachers at the elementary level and those teachers involved in the program at the secondary schools. The length of the training sessions vary depending on the program content. The staff development for Starting Early, for example, is provided through a one-hour orientation session after school, while a three-day training sequence is required for the teachers involved in the one-semester Skills for Adolescence course.

A support team of five Glendale teacher trainers has been identified for helping with the implementation and follow-through training of each program. Team members provide some of the initial training as well as participate in follow-up activities, including peer coaching at individual school sites.

Administrators have been provided with orientation sessions about the various program components. In addition to learning about the curriculum, administrators have been given information about program expectations and suggestions for monitoring, supporting, and assisting in implementing the program at their respective schools.

Teachers and support personnel have been provided training in referral procedures for students at risk. This includes the utilization of District personnel as well as community agencies and organizations.

E. Parent Involvement

The Glendale Unified School District has implemented a comprehensive program to engage parents in the education of their children. A brochure describing the District's substance abuse prevention education program has been prepared for distribution to parents. Each year, hundreds of parents participate in parent education workshops led by District-trained facilitators. The facilitators utilize a District curriculum developed by a team of teachers and parents. The curriculum includes lessons on communications, discipline at home, parent/teacher partnership, how to help your child succeed in school, substance abuse prevention, and self-esteem.

A cadre of 90 individuals has received special training in order to become parent education workshop facilitators. Each school in the District is able to offer parent seminars in various portions of the curriculum. In addition, a special parent workshop series has been established for the parents of at-risk students. Parents are referred to this series by counselors, teachers, and site administrators.

A home/school packet has been developed, and lessons are taken home by students in the "Thursday Folder" and serve as a discussion guide between children and their parents. Completed lessons are signed by the child and the parent before being returned to school. The lessons reinforce the content of the Thomas Jefferson Character Education Program, the Starting Early curriculum, and Here's Looking At You 2000.

F. Student Assistance/Intervention

While the main message from the school is "no to drugs," assistance is available to students who do become involved with drug usage. Special programs have also been established for students at risk. Training has been provided for staff members in all schools concerning counseling and other referral programs available to needy students and their parents. A pilot program in six elementary schools provides an adult "student advocate" who assists identified high-risk students and their parents by operating as a case manager.

At the secondary level, peer support groups have been formed on each of the high school campuses. Peer counselors are given training in listening and providing support on a one-to-one basis. Peer support counselors

are instructed on ways to direct problem cases to the school counselor and other professionals. Peer counselors are also given training in conflict resolution. Special tobacco education programs are provided by a school counselor for high-risk youth, including teen mothers and continuation high school students.

A "Survival Directory Hotline" card has been prepared and distributed to students. The card lists telephone numbers of community agencies providing assistance in such areas as drug abuse, safe rides, and suicide prevention. In addition, a Teen Resource Guide has been published and distributed to all administrators and counselors. The guide provides information about community referral agencies. Some agencies, including the YMCA, offer counseling services on school campuses to students and parents caught in the snarl of substance abuse.

G. Positive Alternatives

Realizing that wholesome leisure time activities can be an alternative to young people becoming involved in drugs, efforts have been made to provide after-school activities. Each middle school has implemented an after-school program which provides recreational activities as well as study facilities with peer tutoring. Through the efforts of students and community volunteers, a teen center has recently opened in downtown Glendale. The center provides a place for students to meet, study rooms, computers, counseling, and recreational activities.

After-school child care programs are available at elementary school sites. Staff members lead students in various activities, including sports, crafts, and special projects. Drug education lessons are provided on a weekly basis, culminating in a "say no to drugs" rally in the spring. This event includes a poster and t-shirt logo contest, special speakers, and entertainment. Additional programs sponsored by community youth agencies, including the Scouts and YMCA, provide activities after school for a large number of young people.

H. Community Involvement

Substance abuse prevention must be a community-wide effort. Many community activities are underway in Glendale. A District-wide Substance Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee, composed of the same organizations

who served on the original ad hoc committee, meets to coordinate community efforts. A special committee appointed by the Mayor, including school representatives, is seeking ways to reduce drug use in the community.

Red Ribbon Week, sponsored each year by the Glendale PTA Council, brings people from all over the community together in a variety of activities aimed at heightened knowledge about drug misuse. Several service clubs have sponsored drug awareness assemblies and other special events on school campuses. Special programs are held as part of the "Great American Smokeout." A coalition of Glendale businessmen raised the funds to implement the Thomas Jefferson Character Education Program. The local Lions' Club funded much of the start-up costs for the Skills for Adolescence Program.

The Glendale Police Department provides officers to visit classrooms to talk with youngsters about the dangers of drug use. The local police department also provides a full-time Resource Officer at most secondary school campuses. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has provided some of the funding and training for the Here's Looking At You 2000 Program.

In 1990, through the leadership of the Glendale City Council, a city-wide drug prevention task force was formed. Representatives of the School District joined other community leaders in reviewing the problems and recommending solutions to substance abuse in the community. The recommendations were issued in a "White Paper" directed to medical and psychological providers, the business community, government, religious and civic organizations, and the schools, parents, and youth. The section of the report relating to schools and youth was reviewed by the District Advisory Committee as part of the Program Assessment Conference held in the spring of 1992.

I. Evaluation

Three methods are used to gather evaluation data about the program. First, a student survey is administered to a representative group of students randomly selected each year. Since the objectives of the program focus on establishing and maintaining desirable student behaviors and attitudes, the survey questionnaire asks for student agreement or disagreement on certain behaviors. The student survey results provide evidence of positive attitudes concerning drug use, resistance to peer pressure, and decision making. At the secondary level, students are asked about their use of drug, alcohol, and

tobacco. Overall, these surveys reflect a national trend indicating a reduction of drug usage among teenagers.

The second body of evaluation data comes from the teachers who are implementing the substance abuse curricula. Teachers are surveyed at the end of the year and asked for their perceptions. The results indicate that all curricular programs had a significant positive impact on student knowledge, communication skills, and peer-resistant skills.

Finally, school discipline and police records are compared one year to another. An analysis of official school records indicates a decrease in suspensions for alcohol, drugs, and tobacco possessions. Police records revealed a decrease in juvenile felonies and misdemeanors.

While it is impossible to draw conclusions based on four years of data collection, the results thus far are encouraging. The information generated will serve as a good baseline for future study which can be used to judge program effectiveness and assist in program modifications.

## III. Summary

The Glendale Unified School District has planned and implemented a comprehensive drug, alcohol, and tobacco education program based on the emerging evidence of successful drug education programs. First, the Glendale program has a sequential outcome-based curriculum that provides students with knowledge about substance abuse. Equally important, the curriculum provides students with skills to help them make appropriate decisions and resist peer and group pressures to become involved with drugs.

Secondly, the program has a strong "no to drugs" message. The possession, use, and sale of drugs is prohibited at school and at school-sponsored activities. The curriculum emphasizes that a decision to become involved with drugs is a bad decision.

Finally, substance abuse prevention is seen as a community-wide effort. The schools have joined with parents, local law enforcement, community agencies, and local government to plan and implement activities aimed at making our schools and community drug-free.

IV. Curriculum References

Character Education, Thomas Jefferson Research Center, 1143 North Lake Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91104. (818) 798-0791

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), DARE America, Box 2090, Los Angeles, CA 90051. (800) 223-DARE

Here's Looking At You 2000, Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 22323 Pacific Highway South, Seattle, WA 98198. (206) 824-2907

Skills for Adolescence, Quest International, 537 Jones Road, P.O. Box 566, Granville, OH 43023-0566. (800) 446-2700

Starting Early, American Automobile Association--Traffic Safety Department, Falls Church, VA 22047.

For further information, contact:

Dr. Donald W. Empey
Deputy Superintendent
Educational Services
Administration Center
Glendale Unified School District
223 North Jackson Street
Glendale, CA 91206
(818) 241-3111

OR

Suzanne Summerfelt
Teacher Specialist
Clark Center
Glendale Unified School District
4747 New York Avenue
La Crescenta, CA 91214
(818) 249-5104